

strenuous effort to overrun it, and attach it to the Confederacy. The responsibilities of the commanding officer in Kentucky were, therefore, very great, and his tasks very onerous.

Brigadier-General Anderson, who had been promoted to this rank in recognition of his services at Fort Sumter, commanded the militia of Kentucky during the period of neutrality, and for a few weeks thereafter; but he found his health unequal to the strain, and, early in October, he was relieved at his own request, he was succeeded by General William T. Sherman. This officer, whose abilities were confessedly of a very high order, found himself in command of a small force, ill-disciplined, and part of it badly armed. His antagonists were vigilant and active. In the middle of October, his available troops numbered by his own estimate not much over 20,000.¹ They were divided into three bodies; one, under General Nelson, near the easterly frontier of Kentucky, one, under General Thomas, confronting a Confederate force under Zollicoffer near Cumberland Gap, and the main body, under Sherman himself, behind Green River, at Nolin, facing the principal Confederate force at Bowling Green, a town situated at the point where the Louisville and Nashville railroad crosses the Big Barren River, about

fifty miles
from Nashville. General A. S. Johnston,
the Confederate commander, tried in every way to
create the impression that his army was much
larger than it really was; and, in great part, he
succeeded. Gen-

3 W. U. 548. His force was much larger than this, on
paper, at least,
on November 10, 1861. Johnston, 538,